

Planning for the Future

The Heritage Alliance

Today, the government published a pre-white paper document, [“Planning for the Future”](#). This was accompanied by a statement in the House from Robert Jenrick, and an [announcement](#) on GOV.UK. A summary of the relevant parts of the document is below:

Key points

- The Government will bring forward a series of publications in the coming months:
 - A Planning White Paper and housing strategy, to be published alongside the Spending Review in July;
 - A Building Safety Bill;
 - A Renters’ Reform Bill.
- Over the spring and summer, the Government will work with local authorities, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise (SME) housebuilders, local groups, the construction industry and others to shape a long-term programme of reform for the country’s planning system and housing market.

Supporting communities to deliver more homes for local people

- The Government has committed to take a “fresh and sensible look at planning rules”, especially in urban areas. They wish to modernise the system, accelerate planning decisions, and make it easier for communities to play a role in the planning decisions that affect them.
- It will support local authorities to consider **different options**, such as housing-led regeneration of their high streets, **building upwards on already developed land and stations**, densifying gently in existing residential areas and making the most of their under-utilised brownfield land. Alongside this, the government will introduce measures to encourage authorities to put housing plans in place as soon as possible.
- These planning changes will be underpinned by an additional £10.9 billion of funding.
- The Government will aim to promote more, well-planned development where homes are needed, including on **brownfield sites**.
- They plan to introduce **new rules to encourage building upwards**, increasing density in line with local character and make the most of local infrastructure – they will introduce new permitted development rights for building upwards on existing buildings by **summer 2020**, including to extend residential blocks by up to two storeys and to deliver new and bigger homes. They also plan to consult on the detail of a new **permitted development right to allow vacant commercial buildings, industrial buildings and residential blocks to be demolished** and replaced with well-designed new residential units which meet natural light standards.

- The White Paper will propose measures to **accelerate planning**, through the use of new technologies to modernise the system. It will set out a pathway to a new English planning system that is “fit for the future”, focused on “beautiful design” and meeting the challenges of climate change.
- Planning fees will be reformed, including a new structure that will aim to ensure that planning authorities are properly resourced. This will be linked to a new performance framework.
- The Government will aim to improve the effectiveness, take-up, and role of **Compulsory Purchase Orders**. MHCLG will introduce support and expertise to Local Authorities to give **greater confidence in using CPO powers** and will consult on legislative reforms to speed up the decision-making process.

Creating beautiful, sustainable places

- The Government will **revise the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** to “embed the principles of good design and placemaking”. The framework will expand on the fundamental principles of good design to define what is expected of local authorities and developers to support the creation of beautiful places.
- They will also **respond to the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission’s report** – this will put tree lined streets at the centre of future plans, so that they become the norm not the exception.
- **Local places will be asked to produce their own design guides and codes**, aimed at giving local authorities the ability to ensure that new homes conform to local residents’ ideas of beauty through the planning system.
- They wish to deliver “**a green housing revolution**” as part of the Government’s wider commitment to net zero emissions by 2050. This will include **reviewing the policy for building in areas at flood risk**, seeking to ensure that communities across the country know that future development will be safe from floods. **They will assess whether current protections in the NPPF are enough and consider options for further reform.**
- The introduction of a **Future Homes Standard (FHS)** from 2025, which will require up to 80% lower carbon emissions for all new homes.

You can read a Heritage Alliance paper on some of the challenges we see in these proposals [here](#).